

REMARKS

Claims 1-22 are currently pending in the patent application. The Examiner has rejected Claims 4, 5, 10 and 20 under 35 USC 102(e) as anticipated by Hoebeke; has rejected Claims 8 and 9 under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by Grube; has objected to language in Claims 10, 13, and 20; has indicated that Claims 1-3 and 13-19 are allowed; and, has indicated that Claims 6, 7, 11, 12, 21, and 22 are objected to but would be allowed in rewritten in independent format.

By the present amendment, Applicants have canceled Claims 12 and 22 and have amended Claims 4, 6-7, 8, 10, 13, and 20. Applicants believe that all of the remaining claims are allowable over the cited art.

The present invention is directed to a system, method, program, and program storage device for performing a group communication among a plurality of communication terminals, wherein the method comprising the steps of: setting a valid time period on each of communication terminals performing the group communication, wherein the valid time period is longer than a time for back-and-forth transfer between adjoining communication terminals, and is shorter than an expected time for the communication terminals to go out of

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communication range; and communicating among a group of remaining communication terminals except a communication terminal that exceeds the set valid time period. The invention additionally features means and steps wherein time period information is communicated to terminals and wherein communication is conducted based on the time period information. Groups of terminals are established based on ability to adhere to the set time period; and, group information can be stored in group management tables.

Applicants respectfully assert that the claims, as amended, recite the invention as set forth above and are patentable over the cited prior art. The Hoebeke patent is cited for providing a communication method wherein a first communication terminal sends a PLOAM cell with timeslot information and an identifier to other terminals. The Hoebeke timeslot information refers to bandwidth and timeslot length for bandwidth availability. It does not teach or suggest setting a valid time period on each of communication terminals performing the group communication, wherein the valid time period is longer than a time for back-and-forth transfer between adjoining communication terminals, and is shorter than an expected time for the communication terminals to go out of communication range,

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as is now expressly claimed for rejected Claims 4, 5, 10 and 20.

For a reference to anticipate claim language under 35 USC 102, that reference must teach each and every claim feature. Since the Hoebeke patent does not teach setting a valid time period on each of communication terminals performing the group communication, wherein the valid time period is longer than a time for back-and-forth transfer between adjoining communication terminals, and is shorter than an expected time for the communication terminals to go out of communication range, it cannot be maintained that Hoebeke anticipates the invention as claimed. Accordingly, Applicants request reconsideration of the anticipation rejection of Claims 4, 5, 10 and 20.

The Grube patent has been cited against Claims 8 and 9 for teaching formation of a talk group and continuation of the talk group until a predetermined period of time has elapsed during which there was no talk group activity. Applicants respectfully assert that the Grube passages do not teach or suggest a method including the steps of forming a group comprising a plurality of communication terminals that communicate, defining a valid time period for packets for the group, providing a short life time to the group, the short life time being at least twice the

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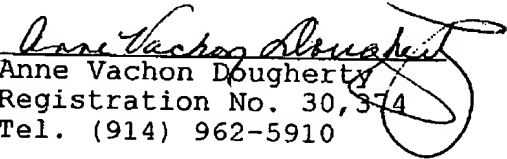
valid time period, communicating the short life time to each of said plurality of communications terminals in the group, and providing decentralized management of said group based on the life time of said communication terminals, as is not set forth in amended Claims 8 and 9. Grube does not define the time for the talk group, but rather defines a non-communication threshold/period. Moreover, Grube does not communicate that threshold information to the members of the talk group. Clearly, an anticipation rejection cannot be maintained, since the Grube patent does not teach each and every feature of Claims 8 and 9.

Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request entry of the amendments, reconsideration of the amended claim language in light of the remarks, withdrawal of the rejections, and allowance of the claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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